

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A device for adjusting and testing the axial force in screw joints, ~~comprising: wherein the device includes a check device for limiting an axial force operating between force applying elements of the screw joint, wherein the check device has means for signal value pick-up from a measuring element whose electrical resistance is variable as a function of the operative axial force~~

a first force applying element in the form of a bolt, a nut, or the like, and further comprising a thread;

a second force applying element complementary to the thread;

a measuring element in the form of a washer contacting the first force applying element or the second force applying element, wherein the electrical resistance of the measuring element is variable as a function of the axial force applied by the first force applying element or the second force applying element to the washer; and

a component for fixing the first force applying element or the second force applying element and preventing rotation thereof comprising means for contacting the measuring element and for signal pickup.

2-3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 1, wherein the means for signal value pick-up comprises contacts for galvanic, capacitive or inductive signal value transmission.

5. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 1, wherein the means for signal value pickup is designed for the simultaneous measurement of one or more signal values.

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 1, wherein the device provides an electrical connection to the electrical earth ~~terminal to the measuring element~~.

8. (Previously presented) The device according to claim 1, wherein the screw joint comprises force-applying elements or connecting elements between the force-applying elements made of wood, metal or plastic.

9. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim ~~2~~ 1, wherein the fixing component is designed for fixing recessed-head, slotted-head, hexagon, square and Allen-key bolts or the like.

10. (Previously presented) The device according to claim 1, wherein a device for acoustic or optical indication of adjusted axial force values is provided.

11. (New) A device for adjusting and testing the axial force in screw joints, wherein the device includes a check device for limiting an axial force operating between force-applying elements of the screw joint, wherein the check device has means for signal value pick-up from an annular measuring element separate and distinct from any force applying elements, but acted on by at least one of the force applying elements, and whose electrical resistance is continuously variable as a function of the operative axial force.

12. (New) The device according to claim 11, wherein the annular measuring element comprises a hollow circular cylinder.

13. (New) The device according to claim 12, wherein the hollow circular cylinder comprises, on the upper or lower side thereof, layers of material whose electrical resistance is variable as a function of the operative axial force applied to the screw joint.

14. (New) The device according to claim 13, wherein the layers of material comprise a piezoresistive coating.